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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE AGENDA OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC REHABILITATION OF RWANDA

Letter dated 29 October 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to request, in accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the forty-eighth session of an additional item entitled "Emergency assistance for the socio-economic rehabilitation of Rwanda".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum setting forth the reasons why the Government of Rwanda considers that this question should be included in the agenda is attached to this request (see annex).

(Signed) Jean-Damascène BIZIMANA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Rwanda
to the United Nations

Annex

Explanatory memorandum

On 1 October 1990, a devastating war broke out in Rwanda following attacks launched from Uganda by the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF).

Since then, the country has suffered a great deal of material damage and many people have been killed. As a result, more than 900,000 displaced persons, constituting 13 per cent of the Rwandese population, have been left completely destitute, the socio-economic infrastructure has been destroyed and basic services have collapsed in the regions where the fighting took place.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs has taken commendable initiatives and in April 1993 launched a consolidated appeal for international assistance for those displaced by the war.

This interorganizational appeal has helped to improve the humanitarian situation in Rwanda.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that despite the progress made, the humanitarian problem is far from being solved and the current situation calls for an intensification of the activities undertaken to meet the immediate needs of the Rwandese population.

With regard to the economic situation, the war has destroyed a substantial quantity of socio-economic and administrative infrastructure, equipment and installations.

The economy of Rwanda, which during the 1980s, was already suffering severe perturbations that were aggravated by the uncertainties of the international economic situation, has now suffered further damage as a result of the war.

Concerned about the failure to control the increase in public expenditure and in the basic disequilibrium of the trade balance, combined with the very fragile structure of the production system, Rwanda began implementing in November 1990 a structural adjustment programme which had received large-scale support from all the donors and from the Bretton Woods institutions.

The macroeconomic and sectoral objectives of that programme were not achieved, however, because its implementation coincided with the outbreak of the war.

Mindful of the urgent need to put an end to this devastating war, the Government of Rwanda and the Rwandese Patriotic Front undertook direct negotiations with the assistance of friendly countries, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations.

In the same context, the Security Council was seized of the question of the situation concerning Rwanda and its consideration of that question led to the adoption of resolutions 812 (1993) of 12 March 1993 and 846 (1993) of

22 June 1993, which created an impetus favourable to the progress and outcome of the negotiations.

The signing of the Arusha Peace Agreement in the United Republic of Tanzania on 4 August 1993 opened the way to a new era of peace and national reconciliation that will make it possible for the Rwandese people to work for the reconstruction and development of their homeland.

This event also opens a path towards the strengthening of peace in Rwanda, which should include the establishment of a programme to help the country to resettle people displaced by the war, repatriate refugees and successfully demobilize and reintegrate into social and economic life the military personnel who are not retained in the new national army.

In view of the scope of the tasks associated with the implementation of the Peace Agreement, Security Council resolution 872 (1993), adopted on 5 October 1993, urges "Member States, United Nations specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to provide and intensify their economic, financial and humanitarian assistance in favour of the Rwandese population and of the democratization process in Rwanda".

Since the war has jeopardized all economic development efforts and has led to the disintegration of key sectors of the national infrastructure, action by the international community is necessary in order to ensure a firmer commitment to contribute to the economic and social rehabilitation of Rwanda, especially as the new situation requires the application of substantial resources which exceed the real capabilities of the country.

The assistance requested would enable Rwanda to implement the relevant provisions of the aforementioned Peace Agreement, to revive the economy and to rebuild and rehabilitate the various parts of the infrastructure which have been destroyed, with a view to ensuring the socio-economic rehabilitation of the country.